

# Radha the Beloved of Jagannath

Madhavi Devi

This poignant song shows that Madhavi Devi saw Lord Jagannath as Shyamasundar Krishna, the beloved of Srimati Radharani.

śrī-nanda-nandana se jaga-bandana  
candana carchita aṅga  
sākṣāt vrajendra kumāra sehari  
nīlādri-bhavya vibhava

The darling son of Nanda,  
He is adored by the whole world.  
His body is decorated and worshipped  
With fragrant sandalwood paste.  
The handsome young son of Braja,  
Hari is the sweetest treasure of Niladri.<sup>1</sup>

pahuḍa kālare prema romāñcare  
rādhā nāma aṅge jaḍi  
prema pulakare gajadantavara  
palañke thānti pahuḍi

As he retires for the night,  
The name of Radha, he holds close to his heart  
In tight embrace, full of amorous excitement.<sup>2</sup>  
Thrilled with love's passionate ecstasy,  
He sleeps on the bedspread decorated with ivory.

śrī gīta-govinda kānta padāvalī  
khaṇḍua rādhā-nāma  
premare aṅgare dhari rasabhare  
vilāsa karanti hari

The tender, sweet verses of Śrī Gīta-govinda<sup>3</sup>  
Bearing the name of Radha,  
Are woven into this *khaṇḍua*.  
This the Lord holds close to his limbs,  
Dallying in luxurious love play,  
Full of tender feelings.

sehi rādhā-nāma kṛṣṇa-priya dhāma  
khaṇḍuā mo śīre thāu  
rādhā-kṛṣṇa nāma jihvāre jaḍita  
hoiṇa jīvāna jāu

May this *khaṇḍua* ever adorn my head,  
The one on which Radha's name inscribed,  
The same that is Krishna's favorite abode!  
May my life come to an end  
While my lips with the names  
Of Radha and Krishna are attached!



The sweet treasure of Niladri

mādhavī dāsiku bāndhavī vicāri  
karuṇā-kara śrīhari  
tava śrī-caraṇa caraṇa tulasi  
mo śīra bhūṣaṇa kari

O Hari, consider Madhavi as your companion  
Be benign and show me compassion!  
Do let me make for my head an ornament,  
Of a few leaves of *Tulsi* sanctified by your feet! 🌿

— Translation by Subas Pani

## Notes

1 Niladri is another name for Jagannath Puri.

2 Every night there is an offering to Lord Jagannath's heart of *tulasī* leaves which have words from *Gītā-govinda* written on them. See the article in this issue entitled "Jagannath and Gita Govinda".

3 Translator's note: This refers to the elaborate ritual of *Baḍa-śṛṅgāra-veśa* and *baḍa-śṛṅgāra-dhūpa* performed every evening in the Srimandir. The *gītā-govinda-khaṇḍua*, a colorful tie and dye silk textile of Orissa with the words of Jayadeva's immortal composition *Śrī Gītā-govinda* woven into it, cover the deities during this ceremony. [For more about the *Baḍa-śṛṅgāra-veśa* and the *gītā-govinda-khaṇḍua*, see the article in this issue, "Gita Govinda Thakur".]

## Bibliography

— Sadashiva Ratha Sharma. *Śrī Śrī Jagannātha O Jayadeva*. Kalinga Student's Store. Cuttack. 1984. Oriya. P. 60. The author of this book mentions that he had discovered this poem in *Sangitasara*, from Braja Kishore Mohanty of Benapur.

— Subas Pani. *Blue Hill, Hymns to Lord Jagannath*. Published by Rupa & Co. New Delhi. 2004